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Prof. JOHN P. FRUIT (Centre College) read a paper entitled :

4. *A Plea for the Study of Literature from an Æsthetic Standpoint.*

Prof. BASKERVILL said in opening the discussion on this paper:—

This is a pretty large question to discuss, Mr. President, but it is very well for an Association like this to have some one now and then to recall us to the true end of all teaching. We deal with words and sentences, with translations of other languages into our own, and we are prone to take the means to the end as the end itself. This is why it is so difficult to teach English, which is the most difficult of all languages to teach, and especially to teach English literature. For years the professors in other languages must work to the point of getting their students to appreciate the higher realms of thought and beauty. I have often thought that we teachers are worth little in teaching genius anything, but our duty is to cultivate a receptive imagination and to get into our students an appreciation of the thoughts and beauties of literature; that, perhaps, is the highest aim of a teacher. The text, if I may take one in this discussion, would be;—"The things seen are temporal and the unseen things—the spiritual—are eternal." As LOWELL says, "The outward things are but the husk."

There are two or three points on which I cannot agree with Prof. FRUIT. I cannot agree with him in considering SHAKESPEARE a great artist as I understand that word. It depends upon what you may consider an artist. He held the mirror to nature and reflected life. If this is the true conception of an artist he is the artist of the highest order, but art, as I understand it, is better embodied in MILTON and TENNYSON. MATTHEW ARNOLD would point English and American youths especially to MILTON as the perfect artist of the English language, and he tells them that those who could not have the perfect models of antiquity, were especially fortunate in having this perfect artist to guide them in their own language. There is this to be said about perfect art: It will live; and that is why I do not think that BROWNING will live as one of the greatest poets of our language. The mentality of the man overrides his art. He is thinking and philosophising to such an extent that art, to a certain degree, is overlooked. I can never become a Browningite. It is true that there are poems of his that will live, but he cannot be classed among the fourteen great poets of English literature. I think that we ought to put into the hands of our pupils perfect specimens of art; they should do their thinking from perfect models, knowing that in this education, just as in all education, there must be an absolutely perfect ideal before the pupil, one so great as to make him feel his utter inability

of ever attaining unto it. He must be made hungry in his soul for great thoughts, and not for grammatical questions and the mere side issues of life.

Prof. ELLIOTT said :—

The thought that came into my mind while listening to Prof. FRUIT's paper was, How are the objects he desired to be attained? It is an important problem as to how you are going to open up your subject to the mind of a pupil who has absolutely no acquaintance with the ideas here suggested. On more than one occasion when I have endeavored to present the æsthetic side of a literary production, I have found that the appreciation of it depends so much on the sentiment, on the temperament of the individual, that this part of my work became the most difficult sort of teaching. The question is, What is the best means of approach for the teacher in such circumstances? How far shall he endeavor to analyse the objects of æsthetic criticism, for instance, in his ordinary daily work? I look at that picture, for example; that picture may have for me an engaging personality, one that I can feel and one about which I can reason and speak, but I turn to the student who may not have had a large experience, or perhaps any experience, in studying pictures; there are students whose minds have not been developed by seeing beautiful things and they do not have the pleasurable sensations that have just been mentioned. We have here the objects of æsthetic criticism of which they know nothing. My question then is, How should we begin to develop a sense of the Beautiful? I must say, I think that there is great strength to be drawn from the general views that have been presented to us and from the special local coloring and character which are given in any work of art, in language or elsewhere. We recognize that much depends upon the temperament of the pupil. You may say: The best thing is to associate with the masters in literature. But when you have pupils that have not the temperament, who are dead, so to speak, to the æsthetic sense, and who are wanting perhaps in experience, it becomes to my mind a hard subject to handle. You take a song for instance. What is it? What effect has a song when it is presented to us? We have had several examples brought before us this morning. What pleasure do they give us and what kind of engaging personality is connected with them? To those who have not had any association with the masters in language it is very difficult to present the subject intelligently, or in a manner which will arouse sympathy and curiosity. The pupil says he understands it, but it does not awaken in him any keen or proper sense of appreciation.

Prof. BASKERVILL, in rising to propose an adjournment, said :—

I move that, as we are to attend the reception at Col. COLE's this

afternoon at four o'clock, to which we are requested to come promptly, we adjourn now to meet again at eight o'clock for an evening session, and continue the programme so that we can finish tomorrow, if possible, at about one o'clock P. M.

The motion, on being seconded by Prof. VAN DAELL, was carried, and the convention stood adjourned till eight o'clock, P. M.

"During the recess which followed the afternoon adjournment the members of the Convention, as a body, were most hospitably entertained by Mr. E. W. COLE (Treasurer of Vanderbilt University) and Mrs. COLE, at a reception and musicale given at their residence in Church street. On this occasion the delegates were afforded a delightful opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with many of the leading citizens of Nashville, as well as of enjoying the most cultivated of the city's professional and amateur musical talent."—*Mod. Lang. Notes*, vol. vii, p. 67.

The **Fourth Session** of the Association was called to order at eight o'clock P. M. by the Acting President, Prof. FORTIER.

Prof. C. W. KENT (Univ. of Tennessee) read a paper on

5. *The Translation of Anglo-Saxon Poetry,*

which had been presented by Prof. JAMES M. GARNETT of the University of Virginia. In opening the discussion on this paper the reader of it said:—

In reference to the exercise of translating poetry from any language into modern English we meet, it seems to me, with several difficulties, and one of these is to distinguish between the various class-room methods and the translation for the general public. My own experience in translating English in the class has been largely with CHAUCER. There we are brought face to face with this question: Shall we leave the class to understand from CHAUCER's language what is meant by his passages, and make no attempt whatever to put them into modern English? Shall we leave the class to gather from the language itself its full meaning, or shall we attempt to translate the Chaucerian English into modern English form? If so, are we to reproduce this older English form in idiomatic prose English with no reference whatever to metre, or are we to reproduce it in Chaucerian rhythm or in English verse with modern English rhythm?

It seems to me that in class-room work the proper translation is the idiomatic prose English. I have no patience with the class-room English which we allow in ordinary class work. I fancy that it has a demoralizing effect upon the student's English, and we can avoid